

WEEK EIGHT

—Sunday—

To talk with myself is a very frustrating practice. To talk and know you hear me satisfies my heart like nothing else!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

"Give ear to my words, O Jehovah, consider my meditation." The quality of real interest in our needs is the quality here described. It is so good, my Father, to appear before you with the full knowledge that you are truly listening. You are *not* only waiting until I am through talking to get involved in something important. You hear with the inner ear. I want to tell you how much your listening means to me: (1) You sustain attention — no fluctuating in your absorption of listening. How good to right now know you are leaning forward, looking me directly in the eyes, wholly interested in what I am saying. (2) You are intelligent and are thinking with me each thought I present. There is no distraction or lack of understanding. Even when I am unclear you read the intentions of my heart. Praise you — I love you!

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

What was said above concerning myself is but representative of your interest in all men of all the nations of the world. Every day such waiting is available! But for me I would like to tell you how very, very much this quality means to me: (3) You listen to help and not just to be interested. I am so glad there is a counterpart to all I say in your word. I have *no* need, no sin, no problem you have not discussed in your word. Even the fact that I so sorely need someone who will give this type of interest and I find you are this type of person when I read your word is an example. (4) You listen as the same person — you are eternally the same — you have as much interest today as you had yesterday, and you will be listening tomorrow with the same total absorption you gave me this morning. Oh, blessed be your name!

How do you personally relate to the attentiveness of God, and God who is always listening?

CONFESSION OF SIN

Since I know you are such a good conversationalist — since I know this dialogue called prayer is such a rich

help to me — how is it I do not much more often call on you? Why am I taken up with talking to men and women who do not listen or understand? Forgive this sin! But forgive another sin: selfish ego-centeredness. If I am bothered by those who only half-listen, what of yourself? I have a difficult time selling 12 copies of a pictorial version of your word to 300-400 people. Not because they do not believe it, but because they will not read it! They are not reading the copies without pictures; why read it with pictures? Some do! Some do! Thank you! Thank you! Forgive my lack of faith. I know your word will one day be heard and known by all men. It will judge them on the last day.

*What personal sins do you want to confess?
We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now.*

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

There have been names that I have loved to hear,
But never has there been a name so dear
To this heart of mine, as the name divine,
The precious, precious name of Jesus.
Jesus is the sweetest name I know,
And he's just the same as His lovely name,
And that's the reason why I love Him so;
Oh, Jesus is the sweetest name I know.

HIS WORD

²⁴At this point Festus interrupted Paul's defense.

"You are out of your mind, Paul!" he shouted.

"Your great learning is driving you insane."

²⁵"I am not insane, most excellent Festus," Paul replied. "What I am saying is true and reasonable."

²⁶The king is familiar with these things, and I can speak freely to him. I am convinced that none of this has escaped his notice, because it was not done in a corner. ²⁷King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do."

²⁸Then Agrippa said to Paul, "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?"

²⁹Paul replied, "Short time or long — I pray God that

not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains.”

³⁰The king rose, and with him the governor and Bernice and those sitting with them. ³¹They left the room, and while talking with one another, they said, “This man is not doing anything that deserves death or imprisonment.”

³²Agrippa said to Festus, “This man could have been set free, if he had not appealed to Caesar.” — *Acts 26:24-32, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Oh, let me see this incident through *your* eyes! When you created man as a rational being and he fails to use his capacities for your purpose — when a recital of your interest and involvement in Paul’s life sounds like the words of a mad man — what will you say? Either Festus was not listening or did not care or both! What was said was reasonable and could be understood. How near to acceptance of your Son was King Agrippa? Was he saying with just a little more persuasion Paul would have won him to yourself? Or was he saying what Paul said was not at all adequate to convince him? You know — I wish I did.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Paul is saying what he did for a real purpose — what was it? Isn’t he telling me something very personal to him that he wants to be very personal with me? I believe he is! He is saying to me: “What converted me should convert you.” “I saw the Lord — you through my vision can see him too.” Dear Lord, I do!

“I heard him call to me — accuse me, commission me.” Dear Lord, dear Lord, I *do* hear you — I *do* want to respond to you. I *know* you include me in your commission. Surely I know as much as Agrippa. I can become what Paul was. Paul was a Christian first — “one sent” second. Such is the position of every one of your servants. Paul was also left in chains because of the pride of men. How disappointing are men. How eternally satisfying and fulfilling are all your ways! What Festus and Agrippa didn’t know was that Paul was already set free!

It is so important that you pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for Paul’s polite response to the unreasonable outburst of the governor. (2) Thank you that Paul’s abilities were recognized — even though misunderstood. (3) Thank you that Paul cared about one man named Agrippa. (4) Thank you that we like Agrippa can know and believe what the prophets wrote. (5) Thank you that Paul felt that all who heard on that wonderful day could have become Christians. (6) Thank you that Paul convinced those present of his innocence — and we believe of much, much more.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“*This man could have been set free . . .*” The rulers didn’t know that the greatest freedom possible was already the possession of Paul. “Freedom” is an elusive word — just when we think we have it defined we discover another facet we had not considered. We receive our Lord’s words with new meaning. “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). The knowledge here spoken of by our Lord is experiential knowledge. He is saying, “When you experience the truth then you shall be set free.” Paul had inwardly received the truth of the forgiveness of sins through grace — he then was free from the guilt of condemnation of sin.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I wonder what requests Paul made after he left the court room? We have requests from this experience: (1) Keep me as calm as Paul when men do not understand what I say. (2) Keep my motive clear: to persuade men to become Christians. (3) I believe your prophets — increase my faith. (4) I want to indeed become the kind of Christian I see in Paul. (5) Increase my desire to be a totally submissive slave to King Jesus.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

What are you saying in these verses? (1) “There are yet men who consider gospel preachers insane.” (2) “There are leaders today who are near the kingdom — speak out.” (3) “Politics still mean more to many than truth.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Africa — Points for praise: (1) *The exciting harvest.* The dramatic ingathering into the churches is unique in history. Africa is the first continent to become majority Christian within a single century. (2) *The spiritual hunger* has grown in the backlash of post-independence disillusionment because of the insecurity, economic stress and political ineptitude. The bad news of Africa has dominated the world’s media, but the good news of church growth has not. (3) *The vigor and vitality of many younger churches.* Some of the older churches have stagnated, and growth in some of the more recent evangelical denominations is slowing down, but the third wave of advance has begun in many areas.

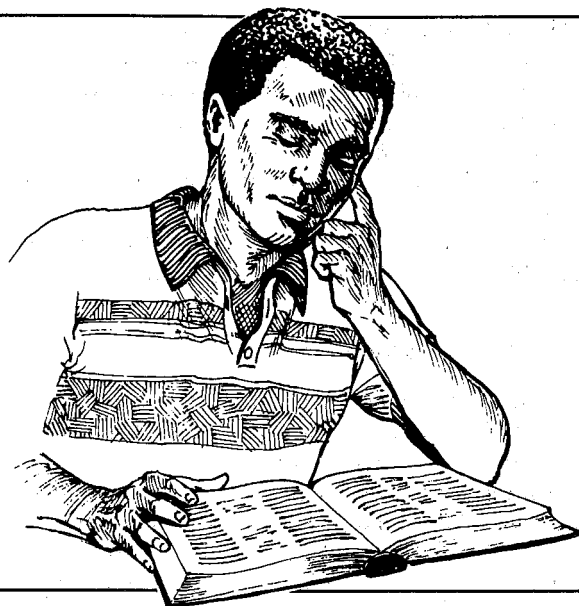
SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and Mighty!
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!

WEEK EIGHT

—Monday—

Love and awe are my most natural of responses to you. I want to be very specific just now in the closet of prayer.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

"But as for me, in the abundance of thy loving-kindness will I come into thy house; in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple" (Psa. 5:7). I am well aware that I am (along with all other Christians) your house today. We are "a holy temple" unto you, made up of living stones, i.e., the lives of your dear people (I Pet. 2:5). At the same time it is with the same attitude as Daniel that I come before you just now. It is in an awareness of the great abundance of loving-kindness that I approach you. I accept every piece of clothing, every bite of food, every hour of rest, every provision for transportation as direct expression of your lovingkindness to me. It humbles me; I bow in awe before you! I bow down in wonder! What I have said of myself should be true of all men. How sad that one day all men will see and acknowledge the source of all good, but it will be too late then.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

How infinitely good you have been this week! You have enabled us to lead a few persons to accept your dear Son and your salvation. I count it the highest of joy to teach and lead eternal people to yourself! To give me strength and health for more than 40 years of such activity is a total amazement to me! It will finally be that "in the abundance of thy lovingkindness" I will be led into your everlasting house called "your presence" — or "at home." Surely I shall never reach thee by any other means! I am keenly aware of how inadequate my conduct and thoughts have been to plead for anything but mercy! Today let me bow anew in "fear" or deep reverence toward your eternal Temple.

How do you personally relate to the loving-kindness of God, and God who is infinitely good?

CONFESSION OF SIN

How I need this time in my worship of you. Indeed, if we were inclined most of the time could be spent in introspection of all our failures and sins. I only want

to be yielded, open, honest. You see and define my sins. Not as I see and define them. I do indeed bow and "worship" before you in *fear*. If I did not believe and accept your grace, mercy, and lovingkindness as readily as your holiness I would be hopeless! Please accept me (as I know you do) in "the beloved." *"Easily angered."* If you are not easily angered with me — and you surely are not — how or why should I be so with others?

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

O Zion, haste, thy mission high fulfilling,
To tell to all the world that God is Light;
That He who made all nations is not willing
One soul should perish, lost in shades of night,
Publish glad tidings,
Tidings of peace;
Tidings of Jesus,
Redemption and release.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

27 When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment. ²We boarded a ship from Adramyttium about to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia, and we put out to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us. —Acts 27:1,2, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Dr. Luke here joins the contingent that sails for Rome. I know he knows that you too were present. Man proposes but you dispose. This voyage was to be with much danger. Why did the authorities wait until

the last few days of sailing time to make such a decision? I am sure you alone really know — I would assume this decision and action is like most governmental moves — tied-up with red tape until it can hardly move at all. What a fortunate choice was Julius! But then, you know who to choose. Was the friendship that Paul established with this centurion what opened the door to the “whole Imperial Regiment in Caesar’s household” (Phil. 1:13)? Only you can truly know — but it is a most intriguing thought and it fits the zealous character of your dear servant Paul (and such speaks to my heart).

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How I *do* want to stand on the dock and prepare to board the ship from Adramyttium! Luke and Aristarchus are there. Then there are also “some other prisoners.” Who were they? How many? I shall gladly take the place of one of them. There is a long and uncertain voyage ahead of us. What shall we think about and do while on board the ship? Shall I introduce the subject of salvation to some of the sailors, or to the prisoners? What shall we eat? Where shall we sleep? What if I get seasick? All these questions and more must have been asked by Luke, Aristarchus and Paul. Why was Luke along? Was he too a prisoner? Perhaps Paul was sick and needed a physician. All of them needed your presence and so do I!

It is so important that you pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

As we anticipate this voyage we pause to thank you. (1) For health of body and mind that makes it possible. (2) For the record from Festus that Julius carries to the Emperor. It is probably much better than the record of some of the other prisoners. (3) For your own choice of the centurion in charge. (4) For the fond memories Paul had of all Luke had shared with him. (5) For the confidence Paul could place in you to deliver them through the unknown. (6) For Luke’s willingness to serve.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“... and we put out to sea. . . .” How well does this describe the whole life of the apostle Paul! He was always going somewhere or uncertain as to what would happen to him in his present location. At the same time, we have not met a man who was more confident and peaceful. The answer to why he could find such rest in unrest is in the fact that our Lord was the captain of his ship. There was Someone at the helm who had already charted the course and knew every channel in the sea. So often it would seem Paul had to settle for an uncertain way. He knew not what form of bonds and afflictions awaited him in

Jerusalem, but he went. He knew not what to expect on the way to Rome, except that he would bear witness, and he went.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

When sailing time came Luke joined Paul at Caesarea. We can see much need for prayer: (1) The needs of Paul as he sailed for Rome can also be ours. Help us to influence all on board with our attitude and words. (2) On every journey give us your traveling mercies. (3) Give us sympathy and understanding for our fellow prisoners. (4) May we never forget your word and yourself are not bound. (5) Give us listening ears for the hurts of those with us. (6) May we see your power in your handiwork of creation. (7) Keep us calm in the face of danger.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

For preparation of today’s journey speak to me: (1) “I see beyond the obvious needs to the needs of your heart.” (2) “Speak to me often on your journey.” (3) “I have an eternal port all ready with a warm welcome for you.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Africa — Point for prayer: The challenge of the “isms”: (a) *Islam* is the strongest ideological contender for the hearts of Africans. Muslim advances since 1960 have been meager in all except in western Sahelian Africa. It is only in some of those lands that conversions to Islam have exceeded those to Christianity. Many gains were only temporary — through force in Sudan and Amin’s Uganda, political intrigue in Nigeria and Cameroon, and financial encouragements in many impoverished states. Yet there is growing sophistication in Muslim missionary activities in Zaire, South Africa and elsewhere. (b) *Revolutionary socialism*, often openly claiming to be Marxist-Leninist, has shaken up many countries. Over 20 nations have had, or still have, revolutionary regimes, but Communism has not generally been attractive to Africans. Christians have suffered restrictions and even severe persecution under some regimes, but only a few were openly repressive to Christians in 1986 for ideological reasons.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Walking in sunlight, all of my journey;
Over the mountains, through the deep vale;
Jesus has said, “I’ll never forsake thee,”
Promise divine that never can fail.
Heavenly sunlight, heavenly sunlight,
Flooding my soul with glory divine;
Hallelujah, I am rejoicing,
Singing His praises, Jesus is mine.

WEEK EIGHT

—Tuesday—

How very often do we read of yourself as our refuge — our fortress — or place of escape — we need such every day!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“But let all those that take refuge in thee rejoice, let them shout for joy because thou defendest them” (Psa. 5:11). How delightful to acknowledge these two wonderful qualities: (1) You are my hiding place, my protector, my true escape. (2) You are my defender; you fight some battles for me. Bless your holy and beautiful name! I love to draw away each day and hide myself in you. Such a comfortable place is the security of your arms! To change the figure just a little: the beautiful, peaceful place I have to live — a charming house full of surprises. One lovely painting, color scheme, carpet after another — somehow the place I live is alive; it emanates energy and strength to me. What I find all men can and should find. How many battles have been fought and won of which I had no knowledge at all? I do believe you have “kept me from the evil one” full many a time. I believe you have told Satan, “This far and no further.”

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

What a refuge and defender you are! Let me cite times when I so sorely need you and seek you: (1) When the events of life just do not make sense or hold any value to me — it is then I can come and relax in your presence and peacefully reach out to eternity, to infinity, to total power, to total knowledge, to absolute love. What a calm and assurance comes over me! (2) When I have lost in the fight of temptation, when trials have really hurt me, I have no doubt whatsoever that you love me and forgive me. I will be able to overcome the same testing later. You forgive me and I can hear you say, “Try again, you are stronger now.” I take refuge in you and because I do I can in the depths of my being rejoice. I shout for joy because you are defending me before your throne.

How do you personally relate to the defense of God, and God who is defender? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Dear God, how often have I tried to find refuge in the fig leaves of my own invention! How many times have I tried to defend myself only to find I was fighting a foe much too strong and wise for me. Forgive me for my stupidity and pride! Most of all: forgive me for not remembering, for being so busy about other things that I found myself exposed to Satan, vulnerable to his attack. I have been hurt and overcome so often just because I was not willing, or ready, or hurting enough to look up, to look away, to break the schedule, to stop the drift. Dear God, here I am. I hide myself in you. Please insulate me today!

What personal sins do you want to confess? There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Christ the Lord is ris'n today, Alleluia!
Sons of men and angels say: Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!
Sing, ye heav'ns, and earth reply. Alleluia!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³The next day we landed at Sidon; and Julius, in kindness to Paul, allowed him to go to his friends so they might provide for his needs. ⁴From there we put out to sea again and passed to the lee of Cyprus because the winds were against us. ⁵When we had sailed across the open sea off the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra in Lycia. ⁶There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy and put us on board. ⁷We made slow headway for many days and had difficulty arriving off Cnidus. When the wind did not allow us to hold our course, we sailed to the lee of Crete, opposite Salmone. ⁸We moved along the coast with difficulty and came to a place called Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea. — Acts 27:3-8, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

It does become redundant to mention the obvious, i.e., you are always "on board." Paul had already gained the respect of Julius. Was it because Paul was a citizen of heaven or of Rome? For whatever reason, it was appreciated. We are sure Paul and Luke lifted their hearts to you in gratitude. What needs did Paul have? Was he seasick? Did he need traveling money? There must have been several interesting days of sailing. What accommodations were furnished? How wonderful it would be to be able to see and know this incident today as if it had only happened yesterday. This capacity is surely present with yourself! This account is in the first person. How glorious to know all your life is that way with you!

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How little of the physical difficulty is here discussed. What creaking and cracking and rocking of the ship is in that little phrase: "The winds were against us"! How many vessels lay at the bottom of the deep waters off the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia? How very little emotion is a part of Luke's record! Could Paul look on the coast of Cilicia and not think of Tarsus and home? What a record of events had passed by since he left the care of his mother and father. Did he mention such thoughts to Luke? How I do want to sail with these good men! A new ship, new people, new quarters, new responsibilities. Paul seems impervious to it all, but was he? I'm sure I would be praying! Since I would not know if these men would live beyond this voyage, I would want to share the hope of the gospel with them. Isn't this true of all men you meet on the ship of your life?

It is so important that you pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

Yes, yes! (1) Thank you for all kindness shown to me (as with Paul) by those who do not even recognize you — the source of all that is kind and good. (2) Thank you for the unselfish interest of so many in the apostle Paul. (3) Thank you for the nautical and geographical accuracy of the historian Luke. (4) Thank you for providing a ship sailing for Italy. There were many on board who could be influenced for our Lord. (5) Thank you for the sense of control Paul had (because of you) on every circumstance. (6) Thank you for uncertainty that can always move us toward yourself! (7) Thank you that I want to thank you.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"... with difficulty (we) came to a place called Fair havens, . . ." Dear Lord, it is with difficulty all of us come to such a place. It is the fair haven of your presence toward which we sail. There are no difficulties in our life with which there is not also a way of

escape that we may be able to endure it. I realize this speaks of temptation (I Cor. 10:13), but temptation becomes tests and steps of maturity if we receive them as such. I am so glad the angels of God have taken up their place of service on our behalf. The greatest way out in all our trials (and sins) is the bright, eternal hope of heaven. We might add that that haven will be very commodious and will last throughout eternity.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Thank you for the kind centurion named Julius. Thank you for Dr. Luke. In this whole circumstance we pray for: (1) An appreciation for friends who have often provided for our needs. (2) Those who sail with us and offer help. (3) You everlasting power seen in your creation. (4) What seems accidental that we can interpret as providential. (5) Every contrary wind which can teach us a lesson. (6) The safety we have enjoyed time after time on our journey thus far. (7) Your total knowledge of the total picture where we can only see a small part.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

As we pause for a little while at "fair havens" we hear you speak to us through this text: (1) "I have been on every voyage of every man every day." (2) "There are no winds or waves I cannot calm." (3) "I give wisdom — but man must want it and ask for it."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Africa — Point for prayer: *The African church in crisis.* Prayer and effort will have to be made to conserve the fruit of growth and prevent spiritual tragedy on a massive scale. (a) Much church growth has been without a deep repentance from sin and the works of darkness. In many churches there are still people bound by the fear of witchcraft. The decisive confrontation with Satan's forces has yet to be made in many areas. (b) Many have come to faith, but lack teaching. Syncretism is widespread because the Word of God is not adequately taught and understood. (c) The critical lack of trained leadership is crippling growth. The poverty of most churches makes it hard to support those in training or in the ministry. (d) There have been few Christians prepared to speak out for moral uprightness and ethical standards in societies riddled with corruption, greed and favoritism. Often church leaders have become, themselves, part of the problem.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

I love Thy Kingdom, Lord,
The house of Thine abode,
The Church our blest Redeemer saved
With His own precious blood.

WEEK EIGHT

—Wednesday—

I want to relax in your arms just now. I am so glad to be in the care of one who loves me perfectly.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth! Who hast set Thy glory above (upon) the heavens” (Psa. 8:1). The word “excellent” does well describe the quality of yourself seen in your handiwork. Man is constantly seeking “excellence” in all his work. This is but a reflection of yourself! I want to praise you for the following qualities of excellence I see in all you have made: (1) Your work all has perfect balance, i.e., when man has not caused a malfunction. The planets and stars are far enough removed from man’s bungling to be a grand example. Without your perfect balance our little planet would long ago have been dissolved. (As indeed it one day shall.) (2) Your work has a real satisfying purpose. However small or large the purpose, it is fulfilled. Most of man’s work (apart from you) has no fulfillment.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

For me alone. “O Lord, my Lord, how excellent is your name in all the earth, your real character is above the heavens.” I tried in the above expression to include all men — in this section let me just speak for myself! I stand in constant amazement and wonder at the beauty and purpose I see in all about me! The renewal of my physical strength is such an excellent power, blessing, gift of yourself. The ability to reason and relate is excellent beyond description. One tree in its total growth cycle is so very excellent! The explanation you have given in your word for the origin, growth and purpose of life is more than excellent! The most excellent of all your works is the work of salvation you gave us as a free gift. Indeed, all your works are gifts for us to enjoy! Blessed and wonderful is your name!

How do you personally relate to the excellence of God, and God who is excellent?

CONFESSION OF SIN

That I should not always so praise you is a sin above

all sins. I shall do so — and right gladly — in your eternal presence. Dear Lord, make it so today! Ingratitude is the fundamental sin of man. How interesting is the fact that we never truly appreciate something until we know what it is to be without it. Such as health from sickness, food out of hunger, money out of debt. Oh, that for once I would look at my hand and appreciate it and its wonderful work for me. Do I have to lose it to thank you deeply, truly for it? Oh, not so!

“Failing to discern the body.” Remarkable! This is carrying the above sin of insensitivity to its ultimate end! When we fail to see you in all of life, we fail to see you at the table! Forgive me, not someone else, but *me!*

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

More like the Master I would ever be,
More of His meekness, more humility;
More zeal to labor, more courage to be true,
More consecration for work He bids me do.
Take Thou my heart, I would be Thine alone;
Take Thou my heart and make it all Thine own;
Purge me from sin, O Lord, I now implore,
Wash me and keep me Thine forevermore.

HIS WORD

⁹Much time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous because by now it was after the Fast. So Paul warned them, ¹⁰“Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss to ship and cargo, and to our own lives also.”

¹¹But the centurion, instead of listening to what Paul said, followed the advice of the pilot and the owner of the ship. ¹²Since the harbor was unsuitable to winter in, the majority decided that we should sail on, hoping to reach Phoenix and winter there. This was a harbor in Crete, facing both southwest and northwest. ¹³When a gentle south wind began to blow, they thought they had obtained what they wanted; so they weighed anchor and sailed along the shore of Crete.

¹⁴Before very long, a wind of hurricane force, called

the "Northeaster," swept down from the island. ¹⁵The ship was caught by the storm and could not head into the wind; so we gave way to it and were driven along. ¹⁶As we passed to the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were hardly able to make the lifeboat secure. ¹⁷When the men had hoisted it aboard, they passed ropes under the ship itself to hold it together. Fearing that they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor and let the ship be driven along. —Acts 27:9-17, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Yes, yes. What an exciting, fearful time these verses describe! But you were there all the time. I wonder if anyone thought that to inquire of Paul was tantamount to inquiring of yourself? How good it would be to be so near to yourself and know your word so well that this would be true of us. Paul was speaking not only on your behalf, but out of all the experience he had in sailing these same waters before. To sail or not to sail, to go or stay — how often have we all faced these decisions. Paul does not here seem to be speaking out of divine illumination. Dear Father, are you saying something about the decisions of life? Man seems to be left up to his own devices, but above and beneath and ahead of us is yourself — in whom we live and move and have our being.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

In a place of crisis, in a time of indecision, in the valley of choice — dear Lord, what shall I do? You seem to say: (1) Examine the whole picture — the total subject. (2) Realize there could be, most likely will be, another time to get what you want now. (3) Do not jump at conclusions — "a south wind" can be deceptive. (4) Even if you make the wrong choice, all is not lost. God is with you in the storm as well as the calm. (5) God expects me to do all I can to solve the problem. (6) There *are* storms that *can* and *will* wreck your little ship, i.e., of finance, or job security, or of local influence. All is not lost. He has something better prepared for you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you even for delays in timing — you can and do use it, if not arrange it. (2) Thank you for the preciseness of Luke's record (i.e., "fast" — Jewish Day of Atonement. In the year 59 A.D. it was on October 5; in 60 A.D. it would have been September 23). (3) Thank you that you can override the foolishness of men and use it to your glory. (4) Thank you for all the winds that blow — all of them blow some good.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"... They tied ropes around the ship itself to hold it together." What desperate precautions will man take to save himself from suffering and death. However

much we work at it, this old ship will come apart and we shall all stand before him with whom we have to do. Why are we so anxious to avoid death? We can understand the attitude of the men (and women?) on board this ship. But it is much more difficult to account for the fear in the hearts of Christians. Paul faced this inevitable journey with great, eager, positive anticipation. "For me to die is gain." He said, "I have a great desire to depart the body which is far better."

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

It was dangerous to sail, but more dangerous to ignore the advice of Paul. (1) As I face the storms of life may I hear the words of your servant Paul. (2) Help me not to be deceived by the "gentle south wind" of the evil one. (3) Lead me to a harbor for the winter of life. (4) Help me to make all necessary precautions in sailing a safe course in life. (5) May I expect the best and prepare for the worst. (6) Thank you for Paul's courageous attitude.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

As we enter the storm there is much we can hear from you: (1) "I can work through a storm as well as without one." (2) "I have ways of convincing even stubborn men." (3) "A gentle south wind can be the precursor of a storm."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Asia — Point for prayer: Praise God for the gospel advances in Asia over the last 200 years. (a) The gospel has been preached in nearly every country in Asia. Only in the Maldives and Mongolia is there no organized indigenous Church. In 19 of the 25 nations over 1% of the population is "Christian"; in seven it is over 10%. Just 200 years ago there were only a few Protestant churches in the whole of Asia. (b) The most dramatic gospel advances have occurred over the past 20 years. Notable is the growth of the Church in South Korea, China and Indonesia. Over the last 10 years maybe nearly 50 million have believed in Christ in China alone. Over the past 10 years the number of Protestants (including Chinese home churches) has increased by 9.8% annually. (c) The maturing of churches in Asia has been remarkable, with rapidly rising educational standards among pastors. There are probably more seminary students in South Korea than in all of Europe!

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

WEEK EIGHT

—Thursday—

I honestly look forward to judgment! I have no confidence in my own righteousness — but I look forward to the world you have prepared. Renew my heart.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“But the Lord shall endure forever; he that prepared his throne for judgment” (Psa. 9:7). It sounds like you are given a great deal of opposition. How eternally true this is! Men have opposed you out of their own selfish desires. It is a strange fact full of wonder that the very qualities that reflect yourself have been used by man to oppose you. Man can choose and he has chosen to reject and refuse. Man has the capacity and desire to worship — he worships himself. It is not that you are in a “waiting game” to simply endure longer than man’s opposition. You have done so much to awaken man to Satan’s lies. You are even now opening the eyes of men to your love and forgiveness. But there will be a judgment — a time of total evaluation. It is so good to worship One who will always endure and who will balance the books.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Just for me! I want to trust Someone who has never betrayed a confidence. I want to love Someone who never in the slightest disappoints. I want to believe Someone who has never told a lie. I want to follow Someone who knows exactly where he is going. Oh, joy unspeakable! I have found that Someone! I want to believe in Someone who has a total record of what all men said — and exactly *why* they said it. What an unspeakable, unimaginable day it will be when you set up your judgment! Truly, truly, I cannot imagine what it will be. But that it will be, I am as sure as your promise backed by your integrity!

How do you personally relate to the judgment of God, and God who is Judge? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Do I really and truly believe I will be judged? Is your grace and mercy an automatic bath that is turned on each time I sin and is applied without fail before I appear before you? Is there no need for true, deep, per-

sonal repentance? If some sins have held on like stubborn barnacles, shall I yet be accepted? There will needs be a cleansing — is that a part of the judgment? No sin or unrepentant sinner will enter into your presence. I know this and tremble in fear! At the same time, I also know that my knowledge and performance are *not* the basis of acceptance. I simply do not want to “continue in sin that grace may abound”! Dear God, forgive me! Accept me! Praise your name, I know you do.

“Lukewarmness.” Dear Lord, I want to feed the fire. I want to stir up the gift. Forgive me for the times I haven’t.

*What personal sins do you want to confess?
We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now.*

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Lord, speak to me, that I may speak
In living echoes of Thy tone;
As Thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thy erring children lost and lone.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

They lowered the sea anchor and let the ship be driven along. ¹⁸We took such a violent battering from the storm that the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard. ¹⁹On the third day, they threw the ship’s tackle overboard with their own hands. ²⁰When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved.

²¹After the men had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: “Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourself this damage and loss. ²²But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. ²³Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me ²⁴and said,

'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' ²⁵*So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.* ²⁶*Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island.*" — *Acts 27:17c-26, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How little and frail is man. As compared to the quantity of water in the sea he is an infinitesimal speck! Since he is so small and incapable, how is it you have an interest in him? It would be easy to say, "because you created him in your own likeness" — and so you have. How is it you placed your likeness in such a small temporary body? If you were going to make man to rule over all the rest of your handiwork, how is it you did not give him a stronger and larger body in which to live? Why create him as subject to all the buffeting of sea and weather? Ah, it is easy to answer part of this question: If man does not do any better with the little you have given him what would he do with more? Bless your name, you have made all things well!

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Just for me. How I can identify with the seasickness of those on board. What sad words are those of Luke: "We finally gave up all hope of being saved." After being without food for so many days (two weeks) there was an apathetic acceptance of the inevitable. It would seem that the last thing they needed to hear were the words of Paul when he said: "I told you so"! But in such a condition this is the one thing I need to hear. I need to be deeply, deeply reminded that you are *always right* — that if I would only listen ahead of time I need not suffer. But even now — in the midst of despair there is hope — my hope is in you and only in you.

It is so important that you pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you dear Lord that the ship escaped the sandbars of Syrtis. (2) Thank you that your chastening does lighten our lives of all excess baggage. (3) Thank you for the immense power you manifest in the physical creation about us, only remotely comparable to your Spiritual power. (4) Thank you that when we give up hope there is always someone who does not. (5) Thank you for Paul's willingness to take advantage of every opportunity to say a word for you. (6) Thank you for the promise that even Caesar will hear from Paul (and you).

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Nevertheless we must run aground on some island." What a remarkable prophecy this was! There are so many other things that could have happened: (1) The

ship could have sunk with all on board. (2) They could have weathered the storm and continued their voyage. (3) They could have made it into a harbor to spend the winter. (4) The ship could have been broken up in the waves and ultimately sunk.

Not one (of 276) would be lost! How wonderfully good you were to Paul and all the people on board. This has not always been your will, but when it is it is indeed appreciated. It is a strange phenomenon that we can be so much more concerned about physical safety than we are with the real person in danger. All 276 persons (with the exception of Paul and his companions) were lost and headed for an eternal drowning in the lake of fire.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

In every desperate situation we need prayer: (1) It is so easy to be marooned in life — "Jesus Savior pilot me." (2) Open my mind to take every precaution I can take against Satan's storm. (3) May I lighten up all excess baggage for the voyage of every day. (4) Teach me again that what is hopeless with men is full of hope with you.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Speak to me from these verses: (1) "Angels still minister to my servants." (2) "I can save men through you from a worse death than drowning." (3) "Seldom do I work through ideal circumstances."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Asia — Points for prayer: (1) *The Church, as a whole*, is stagnant or even losing ground in Sri Lanka, parts of India, Bangladesh, Taiwan and, to an extent, even Hong Kong, though in each land the more evangelistic bodies are growing. There is much nominalism that needs to be replaced by a living, vibrant faith. (2) *The Church is under pressure* from, or discriminated against by, non-Christian religious majorities. Muslims have sought to limit or stop all outreach where they have the political power to do so. The social and family pressures in Hindu and Buddhist societies make conversion hard, and Christians are too frequently hedged in to a single section of the community. (3) *Persecution is very real in Communist states*. Despite the greater degree of freedom for Christians in China, there are believers in prison for their faith. The Church, where it exists, only does so illegally in North Korea, Mongolia and Kampuchea. In Vietnam, Christians are under constant surveillance and pressure.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Wounded for me, wounded for me,
There on the cross He was wounded for me;
Gone my transgressions, and now I am free,
All because Jesus was wounded for me.

WEEK EIGHT

—Friday—

Your "name" represents yourself — all you are and do. I bow before your "name" and trust you. I renew such a relationship just now.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

"And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee; for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee" (Psa. 9:10). Praise just for the qualities I see in this beautiful verse: (1) You are knowable, i.e., man can and should enter into this knowledge. Your qualities and characteristics are all knowledgeable. How wonderful is this thought! We need to pause long before your two great books: a) Nature and b) the Bible. (2) Assimilating facts does not give us a knowledge of yourself — we must become emotionally involved with such information before it becomes real. Such knowledge is experiential or it is nothing. (3) Our response to such knowledge is that we *will* (not *might*) put our trust in you. Only when man walks and talks with you, and you with him can man truly know you.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Just for me. Dear Lord, I do, I do want to *know* your whole self! To know your name (which is many names) is to know you, and not to know you. I must and I do pause before you to contemplate your greatness and goodness! I look with the eyes of my heart at these words which but represent all you are: (1) Love, (2) Power, (3) Wisdom, (4) Grace, (5) Mercy, (6) Kindness, (7) Patience. All of these qualities need to be raised to the *absolute* or totality! Indeed, indeed, you have "not forsaken those who seek you." Right now I bow in wonder and amazement and joy!

How do you personally relate to the known nature of God, and God who is knowable? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

That I am not always caught up in the joy of worship is a sad confession. Such joy need not be loud or

seen, but Jesus did say "my joy I leave with you, my joy I give to you, and no man shall take away my joy." Therefore for such joy to leave is the sin here confessed. Dear Lord, anger and selfish desire removes such joy. Forgive me. I do, I do forgive those who sin against me.

"Stinginess." It is only when we freely give ourselves away to you that we are ready to give generously to others. Forgive me for the miserly attitude I have had toward giving.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

I must tell Jesus all of my trials;
I cannot bear these burdens alone;
In my distress He kindly will help me;
He ever loves and cares for His own.
I must tell Jesus! I must tell Jesus!
I cannot bear my burdens alone;
I must tell Jesus! I must tell Jesus!
Jesus can help me, Jesus alone.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²⁷On the fourteenth night we were still being driven across the Adriatic Sea, when about midnight the sailors sensed they were approaching land. ²⁸They took soundings and found that the water was a hundred and twenty feet deep. A short time later they took soundings again and found it was ninety feet deep. ²⁹Fearing that we would be dashed against the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight. —Acts 27:27-29, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How easy it is to relate this circumstance to yourself! Only you can handle it! How many thousands of

ships and sailors have come and gone on the seas of life? There has never been a despairing cry for help you have not heard. Whatever help any received came from you — recognized or not. Just why thousands (millions) have drowned — just why ships have sunk is best known to you. I am sure it will be no problem at all to explain this to me and to anyone else in the light of eternity. If I am prepared to say there is a plain understanding above mine then, I can safely rest in the One who lives in that realm. From my own understanding it would seem that those who place themselves in the environment of the operation of the laws of nature or the created world will receive the consequences of those laws.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

I do want to get on board that ship. I want to stand on the reeling deck and feel the force of the wind and rain. What strange and different thoughts would I have after fourteen days with little or no food. Fourteen days of seasickness would move me to near despair. How many times I would wish I was dead. Luke evidently was right there to see and hear all that happened. One hundred and twenty feet of turbulent water in the middle of the night is an awesome thought. How would prayers hasten the day? Did all the occupants of the ship participate in these prayers? This seems to be nothing more than a fervent desire which is here described by Luke as a prayer. Dear Lord, how would I word a prayer in such conditions? Like Peter, I cry "Lord save me!"

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the fact that you see and know as well in the night as the day. (2) Thank you for your promises that all the storms of life cannot defeat. (3) Thank you for every desperate situation when I must trust in you. (4) Thank you that my sins are cast into a deeper sea than the Adriatic. (5) Thank you for the four anchors of our faith: (a) Justification; (b) Sanctification; (c) Redemption; (d) Hope. (6) Thank you for the ship of faith that shall never be broken by any rocks of this world. (7) Thank you for the captain of the ship of our life.

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"... they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight." This must describe millions of men in the desperate darkness of a storm at sea. It could describe millions of others who found themselves in a place where danger was present and life has lost its meaning. There is a lesson in this for me — for all who have felt like the night would never end. (1) We need to do what we can. The four anchors have represented as many things as the imagination of man could manufacture. They do represent what we can do. (a) We can read your word — what an anchor! (b) We can talk with others who love us. (c) We can pray with someone else in the same plight. (d) We can take the Lord's supper and remember him who died in darkness. (2) We need to remember *there will be another day.*

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

At midnight it is hard to keep a balance — we need prayer: (1) We are all coming closer to the shore of eternity — how far is it? Lord give us a "sounding" from time to time. (2) There are four anchors we need as we sail through any storm: (a) The anchor of real personal prayer. (b) The anchor of daily meditation upon your word. (c) The anchor of a close friend in whom we can confide. (d) The anchor of a hope both sure and steadfast that reaches through the veil of death into heaven itself. (3) How I do pray for the dawning of that eternal day when all storms will be past. (4) Thank you that you know so much more about every situation than we do.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

In this midnight hour what do you say to us? (1) "Be urgent when life is calm as well as when troubled." (2) "There are men who are counting on you to speak a word for their salvation." (3) "I am your guide through every dark night."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Asia — Point for prayer: *The unfinished task is enormous:* (a) *Vast areas in Central Asia:* Tibet, Kashmir, Northwest China and the Himalaya region have never been effectively evangelized. (b) *The Muslim bloc* is almost untouched. Apart from Javanese Muslims in Indonesia, few have heard the gospel and even fewer have believed. There has, until now, only been a trickle of converts to Christ from Muslim Malays, Indians, Bengalis, Pakistanis, etc. Very few national or expatriate workers are even engaged in seeking to win them. (c) *The Hindus* have only been marginally evangelized. Much of present Indian cross-cultural outreach is to the tribal peoples. (d) *The Buddhists*, in Buddhist majority lands, are largely unreached. Missionary outreach has had meager results and church growth has been slow among Buddhist peoples. Only among the weakly Buddhist Chinese, and then among the Vietnamese and Cambodians in the early '70s has there been more fruit. The churches in Thailand are, however, growing more than for many years.

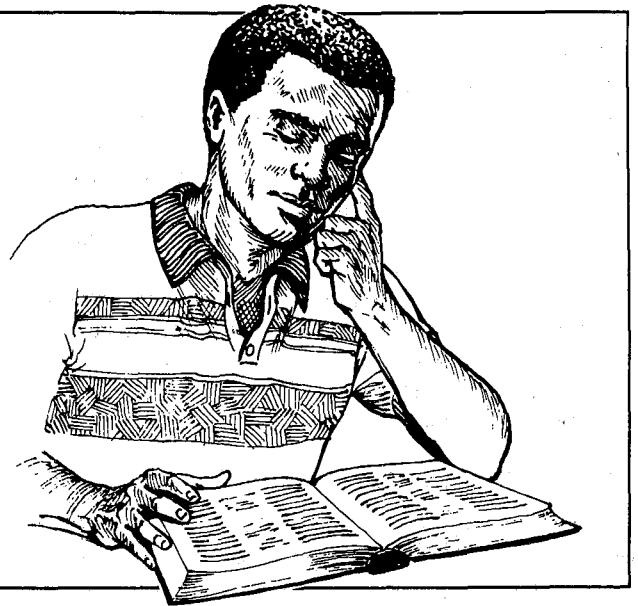
SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

All hail the pow'r of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all.
Let us crown Him, Let us crown Him,
Let us crown the great Redeemer Lord of all;
Let us crown Him, Let us crown Him,
Let us crown Him Lord of all.

WEEK EIGHT

—Saturday—

To spend time in your presence is to assure my heart that I will have joy. Give me your grace and wisdom that it may be so.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Thou wilt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore” (Psa. 16:11). I realize this is a Messianic Psalm fulfilled in the resurrection of my Lord. However, the beautiful promises made in it have such a general application for all men. Oh, will you not gladly show all men the path of life? Indeed you have in the life of your dear Son. But in another sense you have spoken to the fathers in the prophets. You have spoken to all men today through your apostles and prophets as they told of your Son. It is such an encouragement to know there is indeed “a path of life.” Living and thinking and talking “in your presence” is indeed “the fulness of joy.” These tremendous promises all fulfilled in Jesus are open to all men.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Just for me — open for myself — right now! For my own life — *today*. I claim these promises: (1) You will show me the way to walk and talk — indeed you have in your word and in your Son. Am I going to memorize more of your word? Am I going to look again at the life of my Lord? (2) Only in your way is there *life* at all — death is the alternate! The life you give is like yourself — eternal, strong, constant! (3) In your presence is the fulness of joy! This will be eternally true in heaven, but for today, just for today, I need and I want this fulness of joy. I hear my Savior say: “Hitherto have you asked nothing in my name; ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full” (John 16:24). I want to embrace to my heart the words of fisherman Peter: “Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory” (I Pet. 1:8). By your authority are there pleasures for evermore. Amen!

How do you personally relate to the pleasures of God, and God who is the fulness of joy?

CONFESSION OF SIN

Dear Lord, how is it that I am not always filled with joy? It is for the simple reason that I do not always live in your presence. I am not personally identified with the Source of the joy. It is when I meditate upon what you have said that I understand and emotionally respond. But there is a deeper satisfaction. There is a far more fundamental eternal pleasure. It is in the “living hope.” Dear God, I purpose today to make myself more keenly aware of the meaning of what you have said. Forgive me, forgive me for my sad, sick, sinful neglect of practicing your presence. *“Loving to have the preeminence.”* Dear God, you have a prior claim on all the preeminence — my Lord has such a position in *all things*. Take it, Lord, I do not want it!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

O perfect Love, all human love transcending,
Lowly we kneel in prayer before Thy throne,
That theirs may be the love which knows no ending,
Whom Thou forevermore dost join in one.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³⁰In an attempt to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea, pretending they were going to lower some anchors from the bow. ³¹Then Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, “Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved.” ³²So the soldiers cut the ropes that held the lifeboat and let it fall away. —Acts 27:30-32, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How exciting is this word! How strong is the desire

for self-preservation. Somehow I want to look at this incident from *your* perspective. Who were these several sailors? You know them, you know the families left behind in some town to which they fondly hoped to return. You can see the situation that surely appears desperate to these men. I can't imagine you look on them with anything but mercy and pity. At the same time the words of your servant Paul are to be considered. You had already promised the lives of all on board, but not without the help of these sailors could the ship be run aground so all could escape. Paul's cooperation in your plan must have pleased you.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Whose place shall I take? Could I imagine that I would be as driven by a desire to live as these men? Would I stoop to deception to preserve my life? How about the soldiers? I am sure by this time I would respect any words the apostle said. Would I respond as quickly and decisively as these men? Would I cut away the boat? Was this a wise choice? It removed any possibility of using it for a landing, but then it was inadequate at best. Could I imagine myself in Paul's place? It would seem that he was the only one who really knew what was happening. The expertise of these sailors was essential. Their act was selfish; it must be stopped. I cannot say just where I fit in the action here. But I am glad to try to imagine. I remember the angel of the Lord who sees all this.

It is so important that you pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for unsuccessful attempts to escape — it has been very needful that we stay with the good ship Zion. (2) Thank you for weakness that leads to your strength. (3) Thank you for those who love us and warn us when we are wrong. (4) Thank you for those who have responded immediately to our need and helped us. We might surely have been lost if such had not happened. (5) Thank you for removing all ways of escape except in your dear self! (6) Thank you for the sharp sword of your word that can cut through all my deceit. (7) Thank you for Paul who through all the stress was your man with your message.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"... cut the ropes that held the lifeboat and let it fall away." Dear Lord, I know this represents just what must happen and what has happened in my own experience. Until I am ready to cut away all "provisions for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof," I can never really and truly "put on the Lord Jesus." The life this boat represents to me I do not want. But until the

boat is cut off it can be, it does become a provision, a temptation. I take this principle to be the same my Lord had in mind when he said, "If your right eye offend you, pluck it out"; "if your right hand offend you, cut it off"! We are in the midst of a storm; the situation is desperate — it calls for drastic measures. Cut it off and let it go!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Desperation moves men to do strange things — it moves others to pray: (1) May I stay with the ship of life for others if not for myself. (2) Dear Lord, I know some of my complaints are a form of escape — open my eyes. (3) Help me to stop deceiving myself and do what I can to help others. (4) I want to pray as if everything depended on you and work like it all depended on me. (5) Enable me to cut away all avenues of escape into this world. (6) Lord, keep me honest about my motives when I am distressed. (7) Thank you for the ark of safety I find in Jesus.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

When men's hearts fail them for fear, speak to me: (1) "There are many things worse than death." (2) "To live is Christ; to die is gain." (3) "I see a way out when there is none from your viewpoint."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Asia — Points for prayer: (1) *Missionaries are needed*, but it is increasingly difficult to obtain precious missionary visas. Although more unevangelized people live in Asia than in the other continents, and there are more unreached people groups, they often cannot be reached by present means. (2) *The missionary vision of the Asian Church* has grown in a spectacular way. There are many expressions of that vision, including: (a) Outreach to neighboring ethnic or tribal groups. This has frequently taken place in Burma, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, etc. (b) Outreach to people of the same ethnic groups in other lands (Chinese, Korean and Japanese missionary work was, until recently, more of this type).

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

I've a message from the Lord, Hallelujah!
The message unto you I give;
'Tis recorded in His word, Hallelujah!
It is only that you "look and live."
"Look and live," my brother, live,
Look to Jesus now and live;
'Tis recorded in His word, Hallelujah!
It is only that you "look and live."